

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EA/K:JDFOBES/ DLARANARD:LM

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TO AMEMBASSY SEOUL IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 201367

LIMDIS

E.O 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, JA, KS

SUBJECT: DETERIORATION OF KOREAN-JAPANESE RELATIONS

REF: SEOUL 6048, SEOUL 6047

1. ROK MINISTER PAK KUN CALLED ON HABIB MORNING OF SEPT. 12 UNDER URGENT INSTRUCTIONS. AMBASSADOR SNEIDER AND RANARD ALSO PRESENT. HE EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD RECEIVED TELEPHONE CALL FROM VICE MINISTER LHO, FOLLOWING DISCUSSION WITH ERICSON EVENING SEPTEMBER 12, IN WHICH HE WAS INSTRUCTED TO ASK HABIB FOR USG ASSISTANCE.

2. IT DEVELOPED IMMEDIATELY THAT PAK KUN WAS UNAWARE OF SPECIFIC OBSTACLES INVOLVED (HE HAD NOT SEEN THE TEXT OF JAPANESE LETTER) AND ACCORDINGLY HIS REQUEST TO HABIB FOR ASSISTANCE WAS VAGUE AND UNSPECIFIC. HABIB THEN REVIEWED FOR PAK OUR EFFORTS AS WELL AS THOSE BY JAPANESE. WE HAVE TALKED TO JAPANESE, HE SAID, AND EXPLAINED TO THEM WHAT WE UNDERSTOOD TO BE THE BASIC ELEMENTS OF THE KOREAN POSITION. IN OUR VIEW THE JAPANESE HAVE GONE AS FAR AS IS REASONABLE IN RESPONDING TO BASIC KOREAN REQUESTS; THE KOREANS CAN NOT
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CONTINUE TO CHANGE THEIR DEMANDS. NOT ONLY IS THE LANGUAGE

IN THE JAPANESE LETTER FORTHCOMING, BUT SHIINA WAS NOW PREPARED TO DISCUSS THE ISSUE OF CHOSEN SOREN DURING THE VISIT. THE KOREANS, HE SAID, WERE BEING UNREASONABLE IN INSISTING THAT THE JAPANESE MUST SIGN AN AGREED MINUTE. HE HAD BEEN AMAZED THAT THE JAPANESE HAD BEEN SO FORTHCOMING AND HE BELIEVED IT WAS NOW TIME THAT THIS MATTER BE CLOSED. HABIB SUGGESTED THAT AMBASSADOR HAHM TELEPHONE THE BLUE HOUSE TO REPORT OUR VIEWS, BUT PAK KUN INDICATED, HOWEVER, THAT HAHM WAS OUT OF TOWN AND WOULD NOT BE AVAILABLE UNTIL THIS EVENING. HE CONTINUED TO REQUEST THAT HABIB DO WHAT HE CAN TO HELP.

3. HABIB REITERATED HIS VIEWS FORCEFULLY, REQUESTING THAT PAK KUN TAKE CAREFUL NOTE AND REPORT THEM AS STATED. IN U.S. VIEW, JAPANESE HAD MET BASIC KOREAN REQUIREMENTS: JAPANESE HAVE AGREED TO (1) SEND A SPECIAL EMISSARY; (2) ADDRESS A LETTER TO PRESIDENT PARK; (3) INCLUDE IN THIS LETTER REFERENCE TO MORAL RESPONSIBILITY BY GOJ, AS WELL AS EFFORTS TO CONTROL TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS THREATENING ROKG; (4) DISCUSS THE ISSUE OF THE CHOSEN SOREN. SUMMARIZING, HE SAID THAT WE BELIEVE THE TIME HAS COME FOR THIS MATTER TO BE CLOSED OFF AND THAT IT IS NOW UP TO THE KOREANS TO TAKE THIS ACTION. WE HAVE DONE ALL WE POSSIBLY CAN WITH THE JAPANESE AND HAVE BROUGHT THEM AROUND TO THEIR PRESENT POSITION. IF KOREA SUSPENDS RELATIONS, THIS WILL HAVE A SERIOUS IMPACT ON OUR PROBLEMS AT THE UN AND ONLY NORTH KOREA STANDS TO GAIN.

4. BEFORE CONCLUDING, HABIB MADE SPECIAL REFERENCE TO DEMONSTRATIONS IN KOREA. ALTHOUGH STATING HE UNDERSTOOD HOW STRONGLY KOREANS FEEL ABOUT JAPAN, HE STRESSED THAT DEMONSTRATIONS APPEAR TO BE GETTING OUT OF HAND AND THAT THEY COULD HAVE UNPREDICTABLE CONSEQUENCES. PAK KUN ATTEMPTED TO EXPLAIN THAT DEMONSTRATIONS WERE NATURAL CONSEQUENCE OF KOREAN REACTIONS, BUT HABIB MADE CLEAR THAT GOVERNMENT HAD SHOWN NO LACK OF ABILITY IN CONTROLLING STUDENT DEMONSTRATIONS AND COULD CUT ANTI-JAPANESE DEMONSTRATIONS OFF AS WELL. THE TIME HAD COME FOR IT TO DO SO.

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5. MEETING WITH PAK KUN TOOK PLACE BEFORE SEOUL'S 6047 ARRIVED REPORTING DISCUSSION WITH PRIMIN KIM. WE NOTE THEREIN PRIMIN'S DESIRE TO INVOLVE US FURTHER IN DISCUSSION WITH THE JAPANESE CONCERNING KOREAN DEMANDS. WHILE WE RECOGNIZE REASONS WHY KOREANS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT INDIRECT, PERHAPS EVEN AMBIGUOUS, REFERENCES IN JAPANESE LETTER, FACT IS THAT JAPANESE HAVE BEEN AS FORTHCOMING AS WE CAN POSSIBLY EXPECT THEM TO BE IN A SITUATION WHICH CAN HAVE

SENSITIVE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES FOR THEM AS WELL AS
FOR KOREANS. WE BELIEVE KOREANS HAVE EVERYTHING IN
JAPANESE LETTER THEY NEED TO ASSUAGE THEIR OWN
SENSIBILITIES, AND WE DO NOT CONSIDER IT IN OUR INTEREST
TO INTERVENE FURTHER. ACCORDINGLY, YOU ARE TO INFORM
ROKG AT WHICHEVER LEVEL YOU CONSIDER MOST APPROPRIATE OF

OUR VIEWS, AND STRESS, AS WE HAVE STATED TO PAK KUN THIS
MORNING, THAT WE BELIEVE SITUATION SHOULD BE SETTLED NOW
ON WHAT APPEARS TO BE A FAIR AND SENSIBLE BASIS.

6. ANY FURTHER DISCUSSION OF EXACT WORDING OF LETTER
SHOULD BE LEFT TO JAPANESE AND KOREANS TO HANDLE DIRECTLY.
WE DO NOT WISH TO INVOLVE OURSELVES IN HAGGLING OVER
WORDING BUT YOU SHOULD BE PREPARED TO BE AVAILABLE TO
CONVEY VIEWS OF ONE SIDE TO ANOTHER AS APPROPRIATE. KISSINGER

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